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Enthuſiaſm Explained.

[Price Sixpence.]

Enthuſiaſm Explained:

OR, A

DISCOURSE

ON THE

Nature, Kind, and *Cauſe* of ENTHUSIASM.

WITH

PROPER RULES to preſerve the MIND from being Tainted with it.

EXTRACTED from a LEARNED PIECE of a late EMINENT WRITER.

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A DISCOURSE ON *Enthuſiaſm*, &c.

Theiſm and *Enthuſiaſm*, though they ſeem ſo extreamly oppoſite one to another, yet in many Things they very nearly agree. For, to ſay nothing of their joint Conſpiracy againſt the true Knowledge of God and Religion, they are commonly entertain'd, though ſucceſſively, in the ſame Complexion. For that Temper which diſpoſes a Man to liſten to the Magiſterial Dictates of an overbearing *Fancy* more than to the calm and

tious Inſinuations of free *Reaſon*, is a Subject that by turns does very eaſily lodge and give Harbour to theſe miſchievous Gueſts.

For as *Dreams* are the *Fancies* of thoſe who *ſleep*, ſo *Fancies* are but the *Dreams* of Men *awake*. And theſe *Fancies* by Day, as thoſe *Dreams* by Night, will vary and change with the Weather and preſent Temper of the Body: So thoſe who have only a fiery *Enthuſiaſtic* Acknowledgment of God, Change of Diet, feculent Old-Age, or ſome preſent Damps of *Melancholy*, will as confidently repreſent to their *Fancy* that there is no God, as ever it was repreſented that there is one. And then having loſt the Uſe of their more noble Faculties of *Reaſon* and *Underſtanding*, they muſt, according to the Courſe of Nature, be as bold *Atheiſts* now, as they were before confident *Enthuſiaſts*.

Nor do theſe two unruly Gueſts only ſerve themſelves by Turns on the ſame Party, but alſo ſend mutual Supplies one to another, being lodg'd in ſeveral Perſons. For the *Atheiſt's* Pretence to Wit and natural Reaſon (tho' the Foulneſs of his Mind makes him fumble very dotingly in the Uſe of it) makes the *Enthuſiaſt* ſecure

that

that *Reaſon* is no Guide to God: And the *Enthuſiaſt*'s boldly dictating the careleſs Ravings of his own tumultuous *Fancy* for undeniable Principles of Divine Knowledge, confirms the *Atheiſt* that the whole Buſineſs of Religion and the Notion of a God is nothing but a troubleſome Fit of over-curious *Melancholy*.

Wherefore there being that *near Aliance* and *mutual Correſpondence* betwixt theſe two enormous Diſtempers of the Mind, *Atheiſm* and *Enthuſiaſm*, I hold it very ſuitable and convenient, having treated of the former, to add this brief Diſcourſe of the *Nature*, and *Cauſe*, of this latter Diſeaſe.

The Etymology and Variety of the Significations of this Word *Euthuſiaſm* I leave to *Critics* and *Grammarians*; but what we mean by it here, you ſhall fully underſtand, after we have defined what *Inſpiration* is: For *Enthuſiaſm* is nothing elſe but a Miſ-conceit of being *inſpir'd*. Now to be *inſpir'd*, is, *to be moved in an extraordinary Manner by the Power or Spirit of God, to act, ſpeak, or think what is holy, juſt and true*. From hence it will be eaſily underſtood what *Enthuſiaſm*

is, viz. *a full, but falſe Perſwaſion in a Man that he is inſpir'd.*

We ſhall now enquire into the *Cauſe* of this Diſtemper, how it comes to paſs that Man ſhould be thus befooled in his own Conceit. And truly unleſs we ſhould offer leſs Satisfaction than the thing is capable of, we muſt not only treat here of *Melancholy*, but of the *Faculties of the Soul* of Man, whereby it may the better be underſtood how ſhe may become obnoxious to ſuch Diſturbances of *Melancholy*, in which ſhe has quite loſt her own Judgment and Freedom, and can neither keep out nor diſtinguiſh betwixt her own Faculties and real Truths.

We are theeefore to take Notice of the ſeveral *Degrees* and *Natures* of the *Faculties of the Soul*, the loweſt whereof ſhe exerciſes without ſo much as any *Perception* of what ſhe does: And theſe Operations are fatal and natural to her ſo long as ſhe is in the *Body*; and a Man differs in them little from a *Plant*, which therefore you may call the *Vegetative* or *Plantal* Faculties of the Soul.

The *loweſt* of thoſe Faculties, of whoſe preſent Operations we have any *Perception*, are the *outward Senſes*, which upon

upon the Pertingency of the Object to the ſenſitive Organ cannot fail to act, that is, the Soul cannot fail to be affected thereby, nor is it in her Power to ſuſpend her *Perception*, or at leaſt very hardly in her Power.

From whence it is plain, that the Soul is of that Nature, that ſhe ſometimes may awake fatally, and neceſſarily into *Fantaſms* and *Perceptions*, without any Will or Conſent of her own.

Which is found true alſo in *Imagination*, though that Faculty be freer than the former. For what are *Dreams* but the Imaginations and Perceptions of one aſleep? which notwithſtanding ſteal upon the Soul, or riſe out of her without any Conſent of hers; as is moſt manifeſt in ſuch as torment us, and put us to extream Pain till we awake out of them.

And the like Obreptions or unavoidable Importunities of *Thoughts*, which offer or force themſelves upon the *Mind*, may be obſerved even in the Day-time, according to the Nature or Strength of the Complexion of our Bodies; though how the Body does engage the Mind in *Thoughts* or *Imaginations*, is moſt manifeſt in *Sleep*. For according as *Choler*, *Sanguine*, *Phlegm*,

or

or *Melancholy* are predominant, will the Scene of our *Dreams* be, and that without any Check or Curb of Dubitation concerning the Truth and Exiſtence of the Things that then appear.

Of which we can conceive no other Reaſon than this, that the *Inmoſt Seat of Senſe* is very fully and vigorouſly affected, as it is by Objects in the Day, of whoſe real Exiſtence the ordinary Aſſurance is, that they ſo ſtrongly ſtrike or affect our *Senſitive* Faculty; which reſides not in the external Organs, no more than the Artificer's Skill in his Inſtruments, but in ſome more inward Receſſes of the Brain: And therefore the *true* and *real* Seat of Senſe being affected in our *Sleep*, as well as when we are awake, 'tis the leſs Wonder the Soul conceits her *Dreams*, while ſhe is a dreaming, to be no Dreams, but real Tranſactions.

Now that the inward Senſe is ſo vigorouſly affected in theſe *Dreams* proceeds, as I conceive, from hence; becauſe the *Brains*, *Animal Spirits*, or whatever the Soul works upon within in her imaginative Operations, are not conſiderably moved, altered or agitated from any external Motion, but keep intirely and fully that Figuration

ration or Modification, which the Soul *neceſſarily* and *naturally* moulds them into in our *Sleep:* So that the Opinion of the Truth of what is repreſented to us in our *Dreams* is from hence, that *Imagination then* (that is, the inward Figuration of our *Brain* or *Spirits* into this or that Repreſentation) is far *ſtronger* than any Motion or Agitation from *without*, which to them that are awake dims and obſcures their inward Imagination, as the Light of the Sun doth the Light of a Candle in a Room.

But if it were *ſo ſtrong* as to bear itſelf againſt all the Occurſions and Impulſes of *outward* Objects, ſo as not to be broken, but to keep itſelf entire and in *equal* Splendor and Vigor with what is repreſented from *without*, and this *not arbitrariouſly*, hut *neceſſarially* and *unavoidably*, as has been already intimated, the Party thus affected would not fail to take his own Imagination for a real Object of Senſe: As it fell out in one that *Carteſius* mentions, (and there are ſeveral other Examples of that kind) that had his Arm cut off, who being hoodwink'd, complain'd of a Pain in this and the other Finger, when he had loſt his whole Arm.

And

And a further Inſtance may be in mad or melancholy Men, who have confidently affirm'd that they have met the Devil, or converſed with Angels, when it has been nothing but an Encounter with their own Fancy.

Wherefore it is the enormous Strength of *Imagination* (which is the Soul's Weakneſs, or Unwieldneſs, whereby ſhe ſo far ſinks into Fantaſms of *Reaſon* and *Underſtanding*) that thus peremptorily engages a Man to believe a Lie.

And if it be ſo ſtrong as to aſſure us of the Preſence of ſome external Object which yet is not there, why may it not be as effectual in the begetting of the Belief of ſome more internal Apprehenſions, ſuch as have been reported of mad and fanatical Men, who have ſo firmly and immutably fancied themſelves to be *God the Father*, the *Meſſias*, the *Holy Ghoſt*, the *Angel Gabriel*, the *laſt and chiefeſt Prophet*, that God would ſend into the World, and the like?

For their Conceptions are not ſo pure or immaterial, nor ſolid or rational, but that theſe Words to them are always accompanied with ſome ſtrong Fantaſm or full Imagination; the Fulneſs and Clear-

neſs

neſs whereof, as in the Caſe immediately before named, does naturally bear down the Soul into a Belief of the Truth and Exiſtence of what ſhe thus vigorouſly apprehends: And being ſo wholly and entirely immerſed in this Conceit, and ſo vehemently touched therewith, ſhe has either not the Patience to conſider any thing alledged againſt it, or if ſhe do conſider and find her ſelf intangled, ſhe will look upon it as a Piece of human Sophiſtry, and prefer her own Infallibility or the Infallibility of the Spirit before all *carnal Reaſonings* whatſoever: as thoſe whoſe Fancies are fortified by long Uſe and Education in any abſurd Point of a falſe Religion, though wiſe enough in other Things, will firmly hold the Concluſion, notwithſtanding the cleareſt Demonſtration to the contrary.

Now what *Cuſtom* and *Education* do by degrees, diſtemper'd *Fancy* may do in a ſhorter Time. But the Caſe in both is much like that in *Dreams*, where that which is repreſented is neceſſarily taken for true, becauſe nothing ſtronger enervates the Perception. For as the Ligation of the outward Organs of Senſe keeps off ſuch Fluctuations or Undulations of

Motion from without, as might break or obſcure theſe Repreſentations in Sleep; ſo Prejudice and Confidence in a Conceit, when a Man is awake, keeps his fond Imagination vigorous and entire from all Aſſaults of Reaſon that would cauſe any Dubitation.

Nor is it any more Wonder that his Intellectuals ſhould be found in other Things, though he be thus delirious in ſome one Point, no more than that he who thinks he ſees the Devil in a Wood, ſhould not be at all miſtaken in the Circumſtance of Place, but ſee the very ſame Path, Flowers and Graſs, which another in his Wits ſees there as well as himſelf.

To be ſhort therefore, The Original of ſuch peremptory Deluſions as Mankind are obnoxious to, is the enormous Strength aud Vigour of the *Imagination*; which Faculty though it be in ſome Sort in our Power, as *Reſpiration* is, yet it will alſo work without our Leave, as has been already demonſtrated: And hence Men become mad whether they will or no.

Now what it is in us that thus captivates our *Imagination*, and carries it wide away out of the Reach or Hearing of that more free and ſuperior Faculty of *Reaſon*,

is

is hard particularly to define.' But that there are ſundry *material* Things that do moſt certainly change our Mind or Fancy, Experience doth ſufficiently witneſs. But that which is moſt obſervable, and moſt uſeful for the preſent matter in Hand is, That notwithſtanding there is ſuch an enormous Lapſe of the Fancy and Judgment in ſome *one* Thing, yet the Party ſhould be of a ſound Mind in *all other*, according to his natural Capacities and Abilities; which all Phyſicians acknowledge it to be true, and are ready to make good by innumerable Examples. Which I conceive to be of great Moment more thoroughly to conſider.

I do not mean *how* it may come to paſs, (for that we have already declar'd) but *what* excellent *Uſe* it may be of for to prevent that eaſy and ordinary Sophiſm which impoſes upon many, who, if an *Enthuſiaſt* ſpeak *eloquently*, and it may be *rationally* and *piouſly*, (you may be ſure *zealouſly* and *fervently* enough, and with the greateſt *confidence* can be imagin'd) are ſo credulous, that, becauſe of this viſible Dreſs of ſuch laudable Accompliſhments, they will believe him even in that which is not only not probable, but vain and

fooliſh, nay ſometimes very miſchievous and impious to believe; as, That the Party is immediately and extraordinarily *inſpired of God*; That he is a *ſpecial Meſſenger* ſent by him, the *laſt and beſt Prophet*, the *Holy Ghoſt* come in the Fleſh, and ſuch like Stuff as this: Which has been ever and anon ſet on Foot in all Ages by ſome *Enthuſiaſt* or other.

Amongſt whom I do not deny but there may be ſome who, for the main practical Light of Chriſtianity, might have their Judgments as conſiſtent, as thoſe *Melancholiſts* above named had in the ordinary prudential Affairs of the World. But as for this one particular, of being ſupernaturally inſpir'd, of being the laſt Prophet, the laſt Trumpet, the Angel in the midſt of Heaven with the eternal Goſpel in his Hand, the Holy Ghoſt incorporated, God come to Judgment, and the like, this certainly in them is as true, but far worſe, Dotage, than to fancy a Man's ſelf either a *Cock* or *Bull*, when it is plain to the Senſes of all that he is a *Man*.

But it being of ſo weighty a Concernment, I ſhall not ſatisfy my ſelf in this more *general* Account of *Enthuſiaſm*, that it

it may very well reſolved in that Property of *Melancholy*, whereby Men become to be *delirous* in ſome *one* Point, their Judgment ſtanding untouched in *others*. For I ſhall eaſily further demonſtrate that the very Nature of *Melancholy* is ſuch, that it may more fairly and plauſibly tempt a Man into ſuch Conceits of *Inſpiration* and ſupernatural Light from God, than it can poſſibly do into thoſe more extravagant Conceits of being Glaſs, Butter, a Bird, a Beaſt, or any ſuch Thing.

For beſides that which is moſt general of all, that *Melancholy* inclines a Man very ſtrongly peremptorily either to believe or miſ-believe a Thing, (as is plain in that Paſſion of *Suſpicion* and *Jealouſy*, which upon little or no Occaſion will win ſo full Aſſent of the Mind, that it will engage a Man to act as vigorouſly as if he were certain that his Jealouſies were true) it is very well known that this Complexion is the moſt *Religious* Complexion that is, and will be as naturally tampering with Divine Matters, (though in no better Light than that of her own) as Apes and Monkies will be imitating the Actions and Manners of Men.

Neither is there any true ſpiritual

Grace

Grace from God but this mere natural Conſtitution, according to the ſeveral Tempers and Workings of it, will not only *reſemble*, but ſometimes ſeem to *out-ſtrip*, by Reaſon of the Fury and Exceſs of it, and that not only in *Actions*, but very ordinarily in *Eloquence* and *Expreſſions*; as if here alone were to be had that lively Senſe and Underſtanding of all Holy Things, or at leaſt as if there were no other State to be parallel'd to it.

The Event of which muſt be, if a very great Meaſure of the true Grace of God does not intervene, that ſuch a *Melancholiſt* as this muſt be very highly puffed up, and not only fancy himſelf *inſpired*, but believe himſelf ſuch a ſpecial Piece of of *Light* and *Holineſs* that God has ſent into the World, that he will take upon him to *reform*, or rather *annul* the very *Law* and *Religion* he is born under, and make himſelf not at all inferior to either *Moſes* or *Chriſt*, though he have neither any ſound *Reaſon*, nor viſible *Miracle* to extort Belief.

But this is ſtill too general, we ſhall yet more particularly point out the *Cauſes* of this Impoſture. Things that are *great* or *vehement*, People are ſubject to ſuſpect they

ariſe

ariſe from ſome *ſupernatural* Cauſe, inſomuch that the Wind cannot be more than ordinarily high, but they are prone to imagine the Devil raiſed it; nor any ſore Plague or Diſeaſe, but God in an extraordinary Manner to be the Author of it.

So rude Antiquity conceiv'd a kind of Divinity in almoſt any Thing that was extraordinarily *great*. Whence ſome have worſhipp'd very tall Trees, others large Rivers, ſome a great Stone or Rock, otherſome high and vaſt Mountains; whence the *Greeks* confound *Great* and *Holy*, and the *Hebrews* by the *Cedars of God*, *the Mountains of God*, *the Spirit of God*, and the like, underſtand *high Cedars*, *great Mountains*, and *a mighty Spirit* or *Wind*. We may add alſo what is more familiar, how old Women and Nurſes uſe to tell little Children when they aſk concerning the *Moon*, pointing at it with their Fingers, that it is *God's Candle*, becauſe it is ſo great a Light in the Night. All which are Arguments or Intimations that Man's Nature is very prone to ſuſpect ſome ſpecial Preſence of God in any Thing that is *great* or *vehement*.

Whence it is a ſtrong Temptation with the *Melancholiſt*, when he feels a Storm of Devotion

Devotion or Zeal come upon him like a mighty Wind, his Heart being full of Affection, his Head pregnant with clear and ſenſible Repreſentations, and his Mouth flowing and ſtreaming with fit and powerful Expreſſions, ſuch as would aſtoniſh an ordinary Auditory to hear; it is, I ſay, a ſhrewd Temptation to him to think that it is the very *Spirit of God*, that *then moves* ſupernaturally in him; whenas all the Exceſs of Zeal, and Affection, and Fluency of Words is moſt palpably to be reſolved into the Power of *Melancholy*, which is a kind of *natural Inebriation.*

And that there is nothing better than *Nature* in it, it is evident both from the Experience of good and diſcreet Men, who have found themſelves ſtrangely vary in their Zeal, Devotion, and Elocution, as *Melancholy* has been more or leſs predominant in them: and alſo from what all may obſerve in thoſe who have been wicked, mad, and blaſphemous, and yet have ſurpaſſed in this miſtaken Gift of *Prayer*; as is notorious in *Hacket*, who was ſo beſotted with a Conceit of his own Zeal and Eloquence, that he fancy'd himſelf the *Holy Ghoſt.*

Having

Having briefly conſider'd the Nature of *Enthuſiaſm*, it will not be improper to offer ſome neceſſary Rules to preſerve the Mind from being tainted with it.

The beſt Preſervative againſt this grand Error, that I know of, is a Compoſition of theſe three excellent Ingredients, *viz. Temperance*, *Humility*, and *Reaſon*; which as I do not deſpair but that it may recover thoſe who are ſomewhat far gone in this *Enthuſiaſtic* Diſtemper, ſo I am confident that it will not fail to prevent it in them who are not as yet conſiderably ſmitten.

By *Temperance* I underſtand a meaſurable Abſtinence from all hot or heightning Meats or Drinks, as alſo from all venerous Pleaſures and tactual Delights of the Body, from all Softneſs and Effeminacy; a conſtant and peremptory Adheſion to the perfecteſt Degree of *Chaſtity* in the ſingle Life, and of *Continency* in Wedlock, that can be attain'd to. For it is plain in ſundry Examples of *Enthuſiaſm*, that the more hidden and lurking Fumes of *Luſt* had tainted the Fancies of thoſe Pretenders to *Prophecy* and *Inſpiration*.

We will add alſo to theſe, moderate Exerciſe of Body, and ſeaſonable taking of the freſh Air, and due and diſcreet Uſe

of Devotion, whereby the Blood is ventilated and purged from dark oppreſſing Vapours; which a temperate Diet, if not faſting, muſt alſo accompany: or elſe the more hot and zealous our Addreſſes are, the more likely they are to bring Miſchief upon our own Heads, they raiſing the Feculency of our Intemperance into thoſe more precious Parts of the Body, the *Brains* and *Animal Spirits*, and ſo intoxicating the Mind with Fury and Wildneſs.

By *Humility* I underſtand an entire Submiſſion to the Will of God in all Things, a Deadneſs to all Self-excellency and Pre-eminency before others, a perfect Privation of all Deſire of Singularity, or attracting of the Eyes of Men upon a Man's own Perſon, as little to reliſh a Man's own Praiſe or Glory in the World as if he had never been born into it; but to be wholly contented with this one Thing, that his Will is a ſubduing to the Will of God, and that with Thankfulneſs and Reverence he doth receive whatever Divine Providence brings upon him, be it ſweet or ſour, with the hair, or againſt it, it is all one to him; for what he cannot

avoid,

avoid, it is the Gift of God to the World, in order to a greater Good.

But here I muſt confeſs, that he who is thus affected, as he ſeeks no Knowledge to pleaſe himſelf, ſo he cannot avoid being the *moſt knowing Man* that is. For he is ſurrounded with the Beams of Divine Wiſdom, as the low depreſſed Earth with the Rays of the Stars; his deeply and profoundly *humbled* Soul being as it were the Centre of all heavenly Illuminations, as this little Globe of the Earth is of thoſe celeſtial Influences. I profeſs I ſtand amaz'd while I conſider the ineffable Advantages of a Mind thus ſubmitted to the Divine Will, how calm, how comprehenſive, how quick and ſenſible ſhe is, how free, how ſagacious, of how tender a Touch and Judgment ſhe is in all Things. Whenas *Pride* and *ſtrong Deſire* ruffles the Mind into uneven Waves and boiſterous Fluctuations, that the eternal Light of *Reaſon* concerning either *Nature* or *Life*, cannot imprint its perfect and diſtinct Image or Character there; nor can ſo ſubtil and delicate Motions and Impreſſions be ſenſible to the Underſtanding diſturbed and agitated in ſo violent a Storm.

That Man therefore who has got this

humble Frame of Spirit, which is of ſo mighty Concernment for acquiring all manner of *Wiſdom*, as well *Natural* as *Divine*, cannot poſſibly be ſo fooliſh as to be miſtaken in that which is the genuine Reſult of a contrary Temper; and ſuch is that of *Enthuſiaſm*, which puffs up Men into an Opinion that they have a more than ordinary Influence from God that acts upon their Spirits, and that he deſigns them by ſpecial Appointment to be *new Prophets*, *new Law-givers*, *new Davids*, *new Meſſiaſes*, and what not? when it is nothing but the Working of the *Old Man* in them in a fanatical manner.

By *Reaſon* I underſtand ſo ſettled and cautious a Compoſure of Mind as will ſuſpect every high-flown and forward Fancy that endeavours to carry away the Aſſent before deliberate Examination; ſhe not enduring to be gulled by the Vigour or Gariſhneſs of the Repreſentation, nor at all to be born down by the Weight or Strength of it; but patiently to try it by the known Faculties of the Soul, which are either the *common Notions* that all Men in their Wits agree upon, or the *Evidence of outward Senſe*, or elſe a *clear and diſtinct Deduction from theſe.*

Whatever

Whatever is not agreeable to these three is *Fancy*, which testifies nothing of the *Truth* or *Existence* of any Thing, and therefore ought not, nor cannot be assented to by any but Mad-men or Fools.

And those who talk so loud of that higher Principle, *the Spirit*, with Exclusion of these, betray their own Ignorance; and while they would, by their wild Rhetoric, disswade Men from the Use of their *Rational* Faculties, under Pretence of Expectation of an higher and more glorious Light, do as madly, in my mind, as if a Company of Men travailing by Night with Links, Torches, and Lanthorns, some furious Orator amongst them should, by his wonderful Strain of Eloquence, so befool them into a Mis-conceit of their present Condition, comparing of it with the sweet and chearful Splendor of the Day, as thereby to cause them, through Impatience and Indignation, to beat out their Links and Torches, and break a-pieces their Lanthorns against the Ground, and so chuse rather to foot it in the Dark, with hazard of knocking their Noses against the next Tree they meet, and tumbling into the next Ditch, than to continue the Use of those convenient Lights,

Lights, they had in their ſober Temper prepar'd for the Safety of their Journey.

But the *Enthuſiaſt*'s Miſtake is not only in leaving his preſent Guide before he has a better, but in having a falſe Notion of him he does expect. For aſſuredly that *Spirit of Illumination* which reſides in the Souls of the Faithful, is a Principle of the *pureſt Reaſon* that is communicable to the human Nature. And what *this Spirit* has, he has from Chriſt, (as Chriſt himſelf witneſſeth) who is the Eternal *Word*, the all-comprehending Wiſdom and Reaſon of God, wherein he ſees through the Natures and *Ideas* of all Things, with all their reſpects of Dependency, Congruity and Incongruity, or whatever Habitude they have one to another, with one continued Glance at once.

Whatever of *Intellectual Lights* is communicated to us, is derived from hence, and is in us *Particular Reaſon*, or *Reaſon in Succeſſion*, or by *Piecemeal*. Nor is there any Thing *the holy Spirit* did ever ſuggeſt to any Man but it was agreeable to, if not demonſtrable from what we call *Reaſon*. And to be thus perſwaded, how powerful a Curb it will be upon the exorbitant Impreſſions and Motions of *Melancholy*

choly and *Enthuſiaſm*, I leave it to any Man to judge.

To theſe three notable and more general Helps, we might add ſome particular Conſiderations whereby we may keep off this *Enthuſiaſtical* Pertinacy from our ſelves, or diſcover it when it has taken hold upon others. As for example; if any Man ſhall pretend to the Diſcovery of a Truth by *Inſpiration*, that is of no good Uſe or Conſequence to the Church of God, it is to me little leſs than a Demonſtration that he is *Fanatical*. If he heaps up *Falſhoods* as well as *Truth*, and pretends to be *inſpired in all*, it is to me an Evidence he is *inſpired in none* of thoſe Myſteries he offers to the World.

There are certain Advantages alſo that *Enthuſiaſts* have, which are to be taken Notice of, whereby they have impoſed upon many; as, That they have ſpoken very *raiſedly* and *divinely*, which moſt certainly has happen'd to ſundry Perſons a little before they have grown ſtark mad; and that they may hit of ſomething extraordinary is no Pledge of the Truth of the reſt.

For this unquiet and tumultuous Spirit of *Melancholy* ſhaking their whole bodily frame,

frame, is like an Earthquake to one in a Dungeon, which for a ſmall Moment makes the very Walls gape and cleave, and ſo lets in Light for a while at thoſe Chinks; but all cloſes up again ſuddenly, and the Priſoner is confin'd to his wonted Darkneſs. This therefore was a Chance in Nature, not a gracious viſit of the Spirit of God.

Their *Willingneſs alſo to ſuffer*, or *Patience* in ſuffering, may ſeem to give an extraordinary Teſtimony to ſome *Enthuſiaſts*, as if there were ſomething Divine or Supernatural in them. But Admiration will abate, if we conſider how paſſionately ſome abhor from the Senſe of *Pleaſure*, accounting it the greateſt Evil. Others there are who, according to mere Complexion, love to conflict with Troubles and Dangers: ſuch as thoſe are who undergo Warfares and Sea-Voyages with a natural Delight. Others make it their Study, and pride themſelves in it, to become inſenſible of Pain, or to bear it as if they were not at all affected by it; inſomuch that the Condition has paſſed into a Term of Art among the *Stoicks*.

But this is nothing but a *Spartan* Obſtirmation of Mind, back'd with the Senſe of Shame,

Shame, a Deſire of Glory, or the Contentment of being conſcious to themſelves of their own Stoutneſs and Tolerance. Of which a notorious Inſtance is that of the *Lacedæmonian* Lad, who, having conceal'd a Fox under his Coat, would not cry out, though he was a gnawing of his very Entrails.

Anaxarchus his Pain, though it ſeems not ſo ſharp, yet his Courage appears as great; in that he could philoſophize ſo freely while he was, by the Cruelty of *Archelaus*, braying in a Mortar; which yet notwithſtanding, ſetting aſide his natural Surmiſe of the Soul's Immortality, was nothing but ſullen and inconſiderate *Stoiciſm*; for his *Body* had then more Reaſon to defy their Blows than his *Soul*, ſhe alone being capable of Senſe and Pain. So that the ſpecial Support of his Mind was but an inveterate Error and Fancy.

How *Wrath* and *Indignation* will alſo hold up the Spirits againſt *Fear* and *Pain*, is ſeen in that brief Inſtance of *Theano*, who being forcibly urged to betray the Secrets of her Country, bit out her Tongue, and ſpit it at the Face of the Tyrant. Theſe are Examples evident enough of that affected, and not altoge-

ther unattainable Power of *Indolency* amongſt the Heathen.

And yet theſe are but ſmall Things in compariſon of what the *Enthuſiaſt* is armed with, upon the Account of his *peculiar* Condition. For beſides that his very *Complexion* makes him ſtiff, inflexible, and unyielding, (for there is no Temper ſo ſturdy and peremptory as *Melancholy* is, even in Caſes more diſpenſable) there is yet a further Force added thereto from the ſtrong Conceit he has of being *inſpired*, and conſequently of his Cauſe being infallibly good: For this tends naturally to the making of him invincible in his Sufferings, he being conſcious to himſelf both of the firm Goodneſs of his Cauſe, as he conceives, and of the Indiſpenſableneſs of his Duty in adhering thereto. To which you may add the certain Expectation of future Glory and Happineſs for his Martyrdom. So plain it is that there is nothing ſupernatural or miraculous in the Caſe.

I ſhall now endeavour to ſatisfy two Scruples concerning what has been ſaid of *Melancholy* and *Enthuſiaſm*.

The firſt is, How we can diſtinguiſh between *Religion* and *Melancholy*. The ſecond is, Whether we have not reviſ'd

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and vilify'd all *Enthuſiaſm* whatſoever, and invited Men to a cold *Phariſaical* Stupidity and Acting, merely according to an outward Letter, without an inward Teſtimony of Life.

The Meaning of the firſt Scruple muſt be reſtrain'd to ſuch Things as in their Externals are laudable and approvable, *viz.* whether *ſuch as they* be out of a *Divine* or *Natural* Principle; whether from *God* or *Complexion?* For in thoſe Things that are at firſt View diſcern'd to be culpable, it is plain that they are not from God.

I anſwer therefore, That there are three main Diſcriminations betwixt the *Spirit* and the moſt *ſpecious Complexion.* The firſt is, That that *Piety* or *Goodneſs* which is from the Spirit of God is *univerſal*, extirpating every Vice, and omitting nothing that is truly a Divine Virtue.

The ſecond is, A Belief of thoſe holy Oracles comprehended in the Old and New Teſtament, they being rightly interpreted; and particularly of that Article, That *Jeſus Chriſt*, even he who died on the Croſs at *Jeruſalem* betwixt two Theives, is the *Son of God, Sovereign of Men and Angels*, that he in his own Per-

ſon ſhall come again to judge the Quick and the Dead.

The third and laſt is, An *univerſal Prudence*, whereby a Man neither admits nor acts any Thing but what is ſolidly rational at the Bottom, and of which he can give a good Account, let the Succeſs be what it will. He who finds himſelf thus affected, may be ſure it is the *Spirit of God*, not the Power of *Complexion* or *Nature* that rules in him. But this Man to others, if they be unbelieving, and ſo rude and unprepar'd as not to be capable of *Reaſon*, he is nothing to them, unleſs he can do a *Miracle*, How vain then is the *Enthuſiaſt* that is deſtitute of both? But thoſe ancient Records of *Miracles*, done in Behalf of Chriſtianity, are a ſufficent Teſtimony of the Truth of our Religion to thoſe whoſe Hearts are rightly fitted for it.

To the ſecond Scruple I anſwer, That there has not one Word all this Time been ſpoken againſt that *true* and *warrantable Enthuſiaſm* of devout and holy Souls, who are ſo ſtrangely tranſported in that vehement *Love* they bear towards God, and that inexpreſſible *Joy* and *Peace* they find in him. For they are

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modeſt enough and ſober in all this, they witneſſing no other Thing to the World than what others may experience in themſelves, and what is plainly ſet down in the Holy Scriptures, That *the Kingdom of God is Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.*

But in none of theſe Things do they pretend to equalize themſelves to Chriſt, whom God has exalted above Men and Angels, but do profeſs the Efficacy of his Spirit in them, to the Praiſe and Glory of God, and the Comfort and Incouragement of their drooping Neighbour. But what is above this, without evident *Reaſon* or a *Miracle*, is moſt juſtly deem'd to proceed from no *Supernatural* Aſſiſtance, but from ſome *Hypochondriacal* Diſtemper.

Moreover, for thoſe Rapturous and Enthuſiaſtical Affections *even in them who are truly good and pious, it cannot be deny'd but that the Fewel of them is uſually natural or contracted Melancholy*; which any Man may perceive that is *Religious*, unleſs his Soul and Body be blended together, and there be a Confuſion of all; as it is in miſtaken *Enthuſiaſts*, who impute that to God which is proper to Nature.

But *Melancholy* uſually *diſpoſes*, and the Mind

Mind *perfects* the Action through the Power of the Spirit. And a wiſe and holy Man knows how to make Uſe of his Opportunity, according to that Motion of the Apoſtle, *If a Man be ſad, let him pray; if chearful, let him ſing Pſalms.*

Moſt certain it is, and Obſervation will make it good, That the Souls of Men, while they are in theſe mortal Bodies, are as ſo many Priſoners immur'd in ſeveral Priſons, with their ſingle Loopholes looking into ſeveral Quarters, and therefore are able pronounce no further than their proper Proſpect will give them Leave. So the ſeveral Complexions of Men's Bodies diſpoſe or invite them to an eaſy and happy Diſcovery of ſome Things, when yet notwithſtanding if you confer with them concerning other-ſome, that lie not within their Proſpect, or the Limits of their natural *Genius*, they will be enforced either to acknowledge their Ignorance; or, if they will take upon them to judge, (which is the more frequent) they will abundantly diſcover their Error and Miſtake.

I have now, with that Briefneſs I intended, run through the *Nature*, *Cauſe*, *Kind*, and *Cure* of *Enthuſiaſm*, and looking conſiderately back on the Stage I have gone,

gone, fanſy all my Steps perfect, unleſs in that Part which concerns the Cauſes of this Diſtemper, whoſe Enumeration may ſeem defectuous, in that I have omitted the Activity of the Devil, and the wilful Wickedneſs of the Mind of Man, but reſolved all into Complexion, or preſent Temper, or rather Diſtemper of the Body ariſing from natural Cauſes that neceſſarily act thereupon. Whence Men may judge my Diſcourſe as well an Excuſe for, as a Diſcovery of this Diſeaſe of *Enthuſiaſm*.

But I anſwer, That though theſe Cauſes do act neceſſarily upon the Body, and the Body neceſſarily upon the Mind, yet they do not act irreſiſtibly, unleſs a Man have brought himſelf to ſuch a Weakneſs by his own Fault; as he who by his Intemperance has caſt himſelf into a Fever, who then fatally becomes ſubject to the Laws thereof. And though the Devil of himſelf may do much, yet he can do no more ſiniſter Projects in the World. For to ſuch as theſe Enthuſiaſm may prove *Balneum Diaboli*, as is vulgarly ſaid of Melancholy; when as, on the contrary, it may be Laver of Regeneration to them who unfeignedly love and fear God, and endeavour to be ſimple and true of Heart

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in all Things. So plainly inexcuſable are thoſe who have ſo notoriouſly miſcarry'd in this *fanatic Diſtemper*.

And as to my omitting the Agency of the Devil, I anſwer, that his *Cauſality* is more vagrant, more lax and general than to be brought in here, where my Aim was to indigitate the more proper and conſtant Cauſes of that *Diſeaſe*. I might add alſo leſs Philoſophical for this preſent Search, which was only into the *natural* Principles of the ſaid Diſtemper. And for that of the *Vitioſity of Man's Will*, it is evidently ſuppoſed in my Preſcription of the *Cure* of *Enthuſiaſm*, the Neglect whereof is plainly a Man's own Fault. For it is his own Fault that he is not *temperate*, *humble*, and *attentive to Reaſon*: without Recourſe to which indiſpenſable Virtues he can never be freed from that Foulneſs and Uncleanneſs of his Aſtral Spirit, (which is the inmoſt Lodge and Harbour of all impoſturous Fancies and Enthuſiaſtic Dreams) nor can ever arrive to that ſecure State of the Soul, where the Importunities of deceitful Imagination are always declin'd and eluded by the ſafe Guidance and Conduct of the *Intellectual Powers*.

F I N I S.

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